HARAMBEE FLAME

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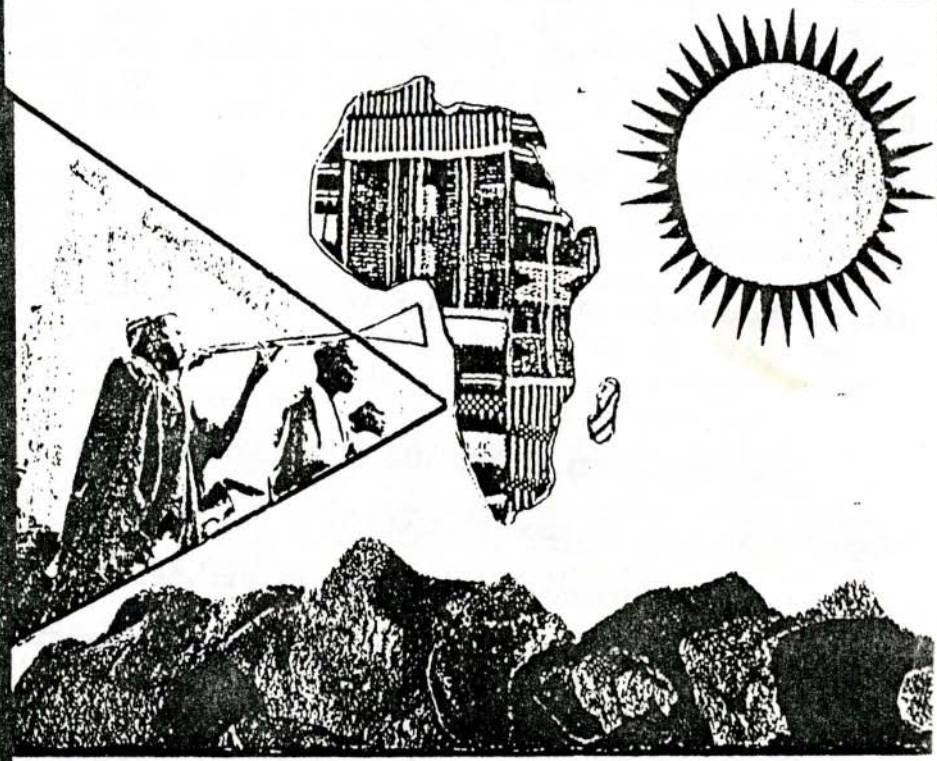

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HARAMBEE AFRIKAN CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

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Akewi(Librarian) - Urser Maati Ra(aka Clarence Stelly)

HARAMBEE AFRIKAN CULTURAL ORGANIZATION CREED

Together we seek to know that which is us, to expand our collective consciousness of who we are and whence we come. We exalt in the fact that Afrikans are beautiful in our own right rather than at the expense of any other ethnic group. And in the true spirit of the Swahili word, "harambee," we promote the idea that cultural awareness is germane to human growth.

COMMENTARY

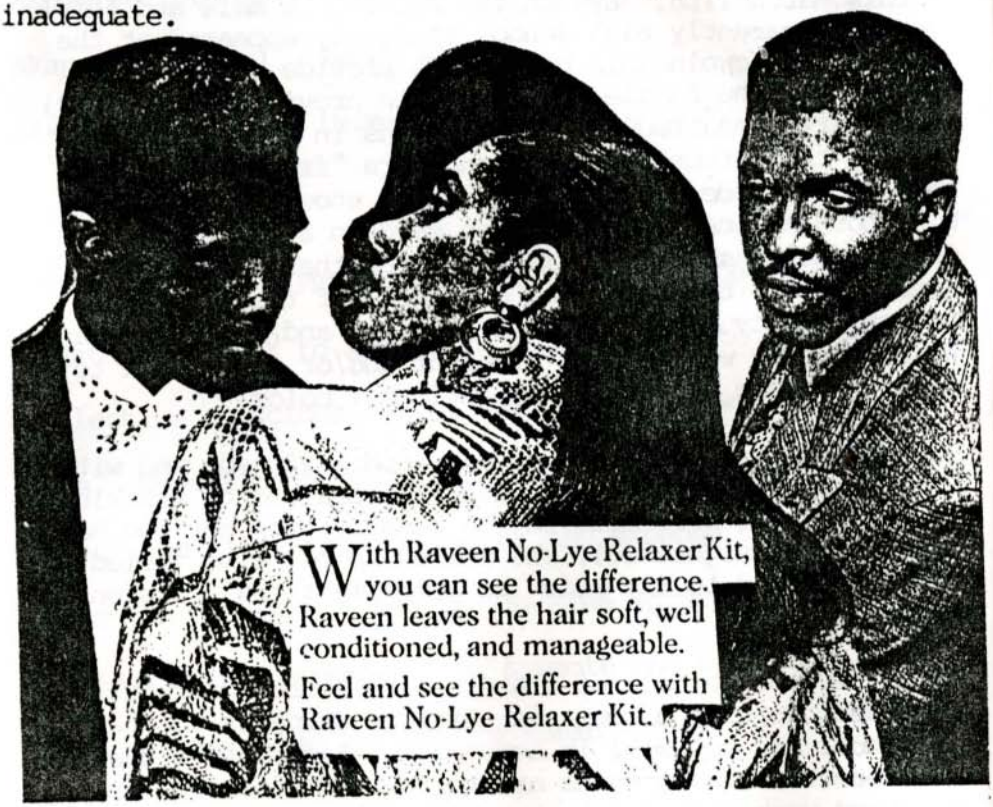
WOWT of Omaha has a regularly scheduled feature, "Eye on the Future," which airs as a brief segment of its Saturday 5 p.m. newscasts. This feature focuses on local youth-related activities and makes use of teens as reporters. On the March 11th. edition of "Eye on the Future," the activity being reported on was the C.A.C.E.(Concerned and Caring Educators) scholarship banquet held at the Red Lion Inn. C.A.C.E. is comprised of Omaha-area African teachers and administrators who express a concern for African students and encourage and reward their academic achievements.

On this March 11th. "Eye on the Future," a male and female couple, apparently high school students, appeared at the site of the scholarship banquet to provide reportage of the event. The female, a Sister, in providing color(ed?) commentary, remarked that the persons in attendance were wearing the hottest fashions and were **"fried, dyed, and laid to the side."** This is a common enough phrase among U.S.-born Africans and is often used in a somewhat pejorative sense toward Sisters or Brothers who lack appreciation, to one degree or other, of their natural African beauty and, thus, use chemical and/or other means to turn their woolly hair straight and/or from black to blond or other unnatural(for Africans) color.

But this Sister--attractive, dark-complexioned, and with African features otherwise--didn't appear to be cracking on the banquet attendees in the least. With her own hair mutilated(straightened), she seemed to be using "fried, dyed, and laid to the side" to compliment the folks on their looks.

Certainly the members of C.A.C.E. are to be congratulated for their work in encouraging African students to stay in school and to excel in academics. And those students who received scholarships are to be congratulated for the hard work they put in by which their scholarships were earned. But this incident points to a pretty obvious area of neglect on the part of C.A.C.E., African parents, and other African adults: **self-esteem.**

Of course, a person might be inclined to ask how students who are getting good grades in school, are headed for colleges or universities, and are attending banquets can possibly be lacking in self-esteem. To address this, let's suppose there is a girl or woman who is checking out her image in the mirror and feeling pleased about what she sees, especially her height. She's saying to herself, "I look good." Continuing to suppose, what if we discover that this female is wearing six-inch spike-heels and, without them, thinks of herself as someone too short to be attractive. Such a girl or woman would have, with her heels on, what we might call "**self-esteem through someone else's eyes.**" In other words, she is seeing herself through the eyes of someone who perceives tallness as beautiful and shortness as ugly or, at best, inadequate.


With Raveen No-Lye Relaxer Kit, you can see the difference.
Raveen leaves the hair soft, well conditioned, and manageable.
Feel and see the difference with Raveen No-Lye Relaxer Kit.

Self-esteem through someone else's eyes. What did Alex Haley do? Two things he is most noted for are his book, THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MALCOLM X and ROOTS(both the book and the movie based on it). ROOTS was, above all else, the saga of a man's struggle to find his origins. However true or false were the various charges of plagiarism, ROOTS takes us on the journey of a man of African ancestry in the U.S. who dedicates a great deal of his life, energy, and financial and other resources to cross an ocean and find the very village in Africa where his ancestors lived.

In ROOTS, Alex told us he had found the name of the very person who began, in the U.S., the lineage that would lead to him. We recall the name: Kunta Kinte. And in the "Roots" mini-series, one of the most powerfully depicted personal struggles was that of Kunta Kinte undergoing whipping after flesh-tearing whipping to retain his identity as "Kunta Kinte" and reject the slaver's imposition of an identity upon him, that of "Toby." Kunta understood that his acceptance of "Toby" would amount to an acceptance of the proposition that he was no longer African and that he was the **property/chattel** of the slaver.

Yet after all the sacrifices, all the emotional turmoil that Haley had been through to find the village of his origin and his ancestor, Kunta Kinte; after all this, Alex Haley remained "Alex Haley." After all this search for self-identity, this descendant of Kunta Kinte **willingly** retained the equivalent of "Toby"--"Alex Haley." He still apparently saw himself(had self-esteem) through someone else's eyes--through the eyes of a European.

When Alex Haley wrote ROOTS, he was grown, was a person of experience, had traveled the world. Armstrong Williams, Roy Innis and Niger Innis, Ken Hamblin, and others of this contemporary crop of Africans in this country, who have made themselves available, for rent or purchase, as defenders of the idea and practice of "Caucasian Supremacy," are grown. Whoopi Goldberg, Iman, O.J. Simpson, and the numerous other well-known jungle-feverists are grown.

Republicans Alan Keyes and Richard Luger. An African with European mind appropriately dressed in European suit.

But the African youth who attended the C.A.C.E. scholarship banquet and who were "fried, dyed, and laid to the side" are not grown and, thus, cannot be held responsible for their attitudes and behaviors to the same degree that grown folks can. They and their fellow youth require guidance from their elders. C.A.C.E., as well as other groups of Africans who are attempting to be positive forces in African youths' lives, must raise their efforts to another level.

It isn't enough that an African does well academically, goes on to the university, gets a degree, and obtains a relatively high-paying job or establishes a successful career. Clarence Thomas has done all this. But he is

(Cont. on page 16)

EDITORIAL POLICY

The HARAMBEE FLAME is the monthly newsletter of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization(Nebraska State Pen chapter). Ours is a pan-Africanist publication, meaning that we view all people of African descent as one African people, having certain basic interests in common. Also, the HARAMBEE FLAME attempts to be Africentric, in that, through study of the history, cultures, and traditional values of African people, we seek to have and cultivate an African way of looking at things.

The main purposes of the HARAMBEE FLAME are to stimulate and inform. We list "stimulate" first because, more than anything else, we want our readers to be moved to question their/your own ideas, lives, and the circumstances in which we live and to challenge those things that must be challenged in order for us to move from a condition of mental and spiritual servitude and physical dependence upon Caucasian institutions to a state of collective self-determination. Toward this purpose, we present commentaries, poems, etc. These do not necessarily represent the official positions of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization.

The HARAMBEE FLAME provides information because wise people want to know what's going on and because certain kinds of information can stimulate the mind, inspire people to want to act, and influence them to pursue proper understanding so that the actions they take will be as effective as possible. The main vehicle we use to provide information is our "From Other Sources" feature in which we make an effort to provide news about the problems we African people are confronted by and the steps we are taking to resolve them. In this feature, we try to provide coverage of the activities of African people and developments affecting us in the U.S., Africa, and elsewhere. "Community News" is another vehicle.

We encourage you to submit your reports, essays, poems, etc. Please enclose stamped return envelope.

FROM OTHER SOURCES

African Village In So. Carolina Celebrates 25th. Year

"Oyotunji is a...village...in Beaufort County, S.C...His Royal Highness Oba Oseijeman, crowned in 1981 in Ife, Nigeria, reigns...

"This is a Yoruba kingdom, and its residents practice a lifestyle that dates back more than 5,000 years.

"Many scoff', he[Baba Obafemi, guide and priest of Osun and Ogungun] says. 'Even many African Americans have turned their backs on us and their roots, but we celebrate our 25th anniversary this year. We've had to struggle to build our village, but we have followers from across the U.S. and Canada, and we'll continue to grow'...

"According to Obafemi, not only do women dictate the homes they and their new husbands will have, but husbands are also required to have enough money to finance their wives in the businesses they desire...

"Yoruba first took hold here in the 1960s. Oseijeman was part of that movement, being one of the senior members of the political group formed to start the Republic of New Africa, an idea born in Harlem to promote a new Africa in the United States by having the American people give them five states...

"Early on, Oseijeman saw that the movement was doomed dto failure. 'There was too much idle talk about getting a huge piece of the United States, and not enough on our work ethics', he says. He knew that the only way to return to his African roots was to find land, buy it and build a Yoruba village...

"the Yorubas are a hard-working, pleasant and studious people who welcome everyone to spend a day, a weekend or a year with them...Tours include the king's palace, the village museum and temple row. Also available are performances by Yoruba dancers and drummers, psychic readings, and lectures by kings and chiefs...

[Information regarding visits to Oyotunji village can be obtained from the African Village Ministry of Tourism; P.O. Box 109; Sheldon, S.C.; 29941]

from "An African Kingdom In America," pages 66-69, Feb./March AMERICAN VISIONS(Washington, D.C.)

Nigeria Reaching Out To "Black" Press In U.S.

"Nigeria is seeking 'better relation' with America's Black media to 'help project a positive image' of Nigeria and Africa said Nigerian Ambassador to the United States Zubir Kazaure, speaking at the recent National Newspaper Publisher Association's(NNPA) mid-winter meeting in Tampa, Fla...

"The ambassador, saying the importance of Africa is 'extricably linked' to the prestige of Blacks in America and other parts of the world, pledged that Nigeria was ready to wrok with Ameerica's Black press for the 'common good' of Blacks on both sides of the Atlantic.

"There is a long history of African nations being stereotyped in the mainstream American media...

"'Thee Nigerian embassy is trying to make an outreach to people who they think will be more friendly to them, and in this case that's the African-American community', said Bill Reed, the executive director of NNPA...

"Ambassador Kazure told the NNPA that Nigeria 'shall examine the possibility of advertising in African-American newspapers and magazines across the United States'...

"Mr. Reed said in addition to advertising in Black publications, the Nigerian embassy plans to do 'basic outreach' to Black media organizations...

"...'What Nigeria is doing is making point to point linkages, so that when you read about Nigeria in Black newspapers it won't be filtered by a white man,..."

-from "Nigeria Reaches Out To Black American Media," page 10, March 10 THE FINAL CALL(Chicago, ILL)

African Prisoners At Collins Joint In New York Dealing With Self-Identity

[We have just received from the African American Culture Committee at the Collins Correctional Facility in New York a brochure, outlining some of the group's activities. The following is excerpted from that brochure.]

"The Cultural Awareness Workshop is designed to teach participants Afrikan and Afrikan American history. Members are exposed to the life styles and values of Afrikan people. You will also be exposed to the historical movemebts of Afrimerikans. In this workshop we stress the importance of a strong foundation of the values and traditions of Afrikan people. [We seek] to strengthen and bring maturity to Afrikan men.

"The Cooperative Economics Workshop is designed to teach participants the basics of economics, credit, small business, franchises, non-profit organizations, the importance of building and maintaining our own stores, shops, and other businesses so that we can profit from them together.

"The Parenting(Fathers) Workshop is designed to teach incarcerated fathers how to become more supportive of our children and spouses. Topics and issues include moral development, value imprinting, communications skills, etc..."

The Pelican Bay Decision

"After one year's deliberation, Federal Judge Thelton Henderson ordered an end to 'the pattern of needless and officially sanctioned brutality' at Pelican Bay State Prison(PBSP) in California...Henderson ruled that the California Departement of Corrections(CDoC) has violated the 8th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution by allowing and, in fact, encouraging guards to use 'grossly excessive' force. Also, the judge found that medical and psychiatric care was deliberately and maliciously neglectful, causing loss of life, disability and severe mental harm...

"As relief, the court appointed a Special Master who has the task of negotiating with the CDoC and the prisoners' lawyers to develop a plan to solve the cited violations within 120 days...

"PBSP and its 1,056-bed Security Housing Unit(SHU) was supposed to be the model high-tech, electronically controlled prison for the world. The judge fell short of closing the windowless, above ground bunker-like SHU, but he demanded significant changes in the policies and practices at Pelican Bay.

"The prisoners began this suit in 1990 with their 300 individual legal actions against the prison.

"The decision leaves intact the use of long-term solitary confinement; the use of racial discrimination in placing prisoners in the SHU; the use of the notorious Snitch, Parole or Die policy; the use of hearsay evidence in gang labeling; and the use of forced confessions about gang activity...

"Presently CDoC is in contempt of a ruling concerning changes in psychiatric care for all prisoners ordered by Judge Henderson's colleague in the Northern District Federal Court. While acknowledging CDoC's pattern of obstructionism, the judge did not offer special orders or techniques to insure speedy compliance with his ruling...

"The use of force as a first resort, often for trivial reasons was condemned. Beating of prisoners after restraint in chains, backroom beatings and 'criminally reckless' violent behavior by guards was found routine at PBSP, especially in the SHU..."

-from "Moral Victory For Prisoners In Pelican Bay Civil Rights Suit: The Madrid v. Gomez Decision," pages 1 and 4, Jan.-Feb. PRISON NEWS SERVICE(Toronto, Ontario, Canada

(Cont. on page 12)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The MOVE organization will be holding its "Ten Years Since The Bombing" program on May 10th in Philadelphia. Part of the May 13 program is a video tape comprised of brief comments from people about the bombing. The organization states that it already has comments from Ben Chavis, Dick Gregory, Alice Walker, Ron Daniels, and several others; and encourages you to make your comments on video tape so they can be included in the presentation. For additional information, write to the MOVE organization at 419 So. 15th St.; Philadelphia, PA; 19146. Or call (215)732-9266.

Kemet Nu Productions announces the availability of two new video presentations by Ashra Kwesi, a prominent researcher of African history who has studied under Dr. Yosef ben-Jochannan and spent several years in both Africa and Europe in his studies: "Afrikan Origin of Civilization," Vol. I and *"Heaven Is Between the Legs of an Afrikan Woman." Also available from Kemet Nu is Ashra Kwesi's "Afrikan Origin of Judeo-Christianity," Vol. III. Contact (213) 938-8031 for ordering information on these and/or other tapes or to inquire about lectures by Kwesi before your school, organization, or other assembly.

The Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization prison chapter's annual banquet is tentatively scheduled for June 10th at the state prison in Lincoln, Nebraska. More information is forthcoming. If you are interested in attending, either as a guest or as a performer, please write to: Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization; P.O. Box 2500; Lincoln, NE.; 68542-2500. Or call 471-3161 between 12:45 and 2:45, Monday through Friday. Ask for ext. 3380.

THE FREEDOM NETWORK is an Afrikan prisoner bulletin that describes itself as committed to the "different yet complementary levels of consciousness of the captive populace...But we are also engaged in a campaign to elicit support from the New Afrikan community outside of these concentration camps..." The address of The Freedom Network is MCM 17365 Annott St.; Detroit, MI.; 48205-3103.

CRISIS IN IDENTITY

I watch the doors close in your eyes
as we approach each other.
you draw the curtains to your soul
when i come
into your conscious/subconscious vision.
you are division,
derision, confusion, illusion...

And i the self you could have been
standing tall, nappy headed,
full lipped, round hipped,
earth footed, sure

You close the door as
your intricate riggings jingle
noiselessly, expensive trappings
trapping you...
your color coordinated gucci braids
unraveling in my presence
sending your essence back
to woolworth's going out
of business
sale

Peace be on you also.

-by Staajabu

Staajabu is a mama/poet
living in Sacramento, CA.

Brothers In Chicago Wage War Against The 40-Ouncer

"Malt Liquor merchants are targeting 'liquid uzis' at young Blacks, particularly males, says Ron Harris and Mandrake, two Chicago activists who have dedicated their lives to combating legal, but deadly, drugs in the Black community...

"Ron and Mandrake, 60, are members of Khepra & Associates, an umbrella organization that brings together activists and disseminates information to the Black community...

"Mandrake says the targeting of Black youth by beer manufacturers has been relentless, and that the rap music industry is being used to push 40 ounce malt liquors to an audience that is making the difference in the corporate profit statements...

"The alcohol content of 40 ounce malt liquors is more potent than the equivalent of regular beers. In addition, the marketing strategies for malt liquors emphasize the macho/Mandingo image of a super virile Black male whose only goal for consuming the brew is for sexual conquest of the Black woman.

"Referring to rappers who convey these images in their songs and videos, Ron says: 'The Black woman can't be a queen in one song and something less than human in another'...

"The latest strategies the two warriors are incorporating in an effort to free Black youth of the 40 ounce grip are:

- -protest ads at sporting events
- -incorporate allies such as the American Heart Association and the American Lung Association
- -involve the Chicago Housing Authority to help identify city owned lots that have illegal billboards or billboards with alcohol or tobacco ads..."

-from "A 40 For My Homey...Not," page 10, March 29 THE FINAL CALL

COMMUNITY NEWS

On the evening of March 16th., Professor Olu Oyinlade addressed a small group of African prisoner in the chapel of the Nebraska State Prison in Lincoln. Olu, originally of Nigeria and presently on staff at Nebraska Weslyan University, spoke on: "Democracy: By Whose Definition." He began his presentation by asking what democracy is and then listing some of the most commonly held ideas and beliefs about democracy. From there, he went on to cite some history concerning the alleged "democracy" of the U.S.; for example, pointing out that the U.S. Cosnstitution was a docuement written and signed by land-holding Caucasian males who intended it for the benefit of Caucasian males.

The presentation moved to a comparison between the ideas of freedom, justice, equality, etc. expressed in the U.S. Constitution and the reality regarding the ideas. Professor Oyinlade discussed the roles wealth, color, and gender play in the degree to which people in this country are able to exercise freedom, receive justice, have influence on the governmental decision-making process, and otherwise be part of a supposed "democracy." He asked how the U.S., having a "democracy" in which people of color, the poor, and women do not reap the same fruits as do Caucasian males of wealth, has earned the right to attempt to export this "democracy" to and impose it upon the nations of Africa.

In the final portion of his presentation, the Brother reminded us that Africa had had democracies long before Europeans arrived on its shores. To illustrate this point, he talked about the West African kingdoms under the leadership of Mansa Musa and Askia the Great, the democratic processes that enabled these nations to thrive, and certain of their achievements. Following a brief question-and-

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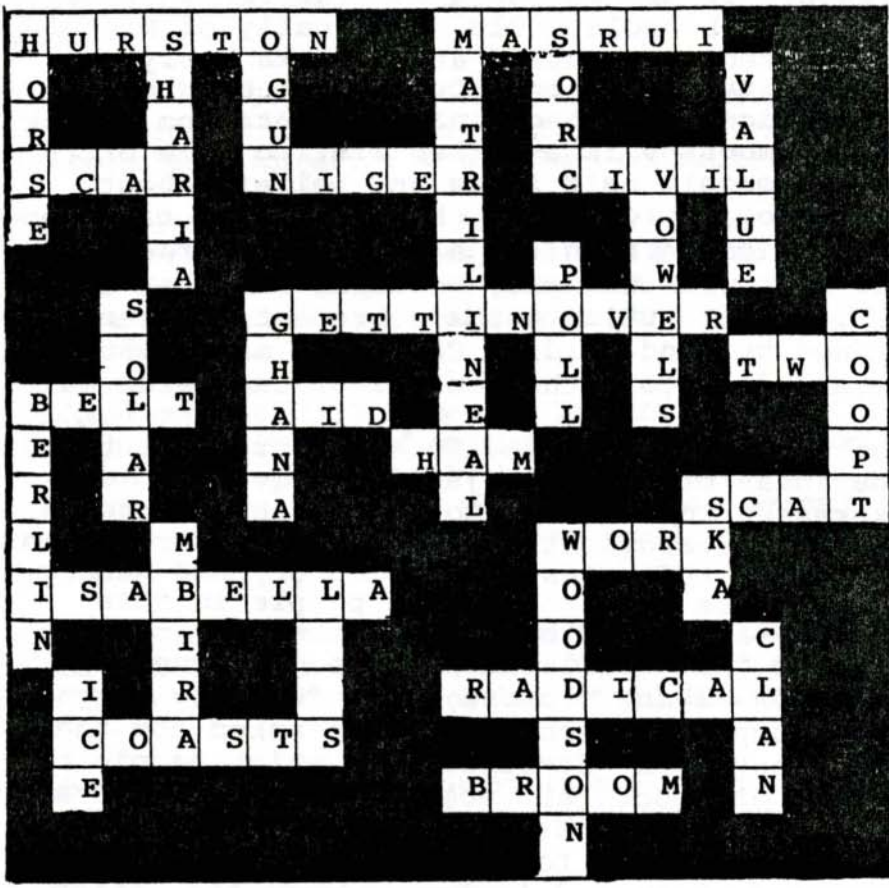
SOLUTION TO FLAME AFRICENTRIC CROSSWORD PUZZLE #4



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COMMUNITY NEWS(Continued)

answer period, Olu concluded that the key to Africa's rising from its current political turmoil, vulnerability to International Monetary Fund and World Bank economic manipulations is a modernizing of ancient African democratic structures and processes, not a continuation of its copying of European political and economic systems.

BACK IN TIME

The photograph of Dr. King and Malcolm X smiling and shaking hands ran in the Washington Post on March 27[1964], and aroused the attention of James Gandy, one of Hoover's key administrators in the racial matters division. In a letter to the FBI's New York field office, Gandy wrote:

> The New York office is reminded that in view of Little's current activities, publicity and national prominence, it is important that his activities be given all coverage which is practical and the Bureau kept closely advised of his statements, pertinent activities and travels throughout the country.

That same day, the Domestic Operations Division of the CIA received a reply from the FBI concerning its own covert investigation of Malcolm X. Hoover, however, was in no mood to cooperate, since that would have been an admission that the FBI was incapable of neutralizing Malcolm X on its own...

What the FBI had discovered, but refused to share with the CIA, was that Malcolm X was making significant inroads into the civil rights arena, a move which clearly had not been anticipated. According to a report sent to Hoover by the FBI's New York field office, Malcolm X had already formed a coalition of seventeen civil rights groups. The coalition was called "ACT." Although the New York office was unable to determine what the initials or acronym represented, it learned that ACT planned a twenty-four-hour school boycott in six major cities in the U.S. if the Senate didn't end debate on the proposed federal Civil Rights Bill by May 5. This was a startling development, since it was the first time the FBI had encountered information indicating that Malcolm X and Dr. King might actually become partners in the civil rights struggle. This boycott, the New York office believed, was one aspect of what Dr. King was referring to when he mentioned that "direct action" would be taken if the bill was still being debated in "the first week of May."

Upon further investigation of the origins of ACT, the

New York field office discovered that Malcolm X had begun organizing the groups during his February 14 visit to Chester, Pennsylvania, while attending a civil rights conference...

The FBI's suspicions that Dr. King and Malcolm X were secretly working together were heightened after it learned that several chapters of the SCLC[Southern Christian Leadership Conference] were members of ACT. But there was more. FBI agents monitoring the activities of Louis Lomax had recorded speeches by the writer which suggested he was abandoning his support of Dr. King and was aiding Malcolm X's drive to bring the issue of America's violations of the human rights of African Americans before the UN...

Source: THE JUDAS FACTOR: THE PLOT TO KILL MALCOLM X
by Karl Evanzz

COMMENTARY(Cont.)

of no more benefit to our people than is David Duke, or Bill Clinton, for that matter.

Typically, schools in this country do **not** educate. They train and indoctrinate. And that indoctrination is Eurocentric, is designed to produce people who will be accepting and supportive of the Caucasian-supremacist, sexist, and capitalist status quo; is designed to produce people with a consumer mentality; is designed, with regard to African people in particular, to produce Clarence Thomases and Whoopi Goldbergs, **not** Harriet Tubmans and Omowales(Malcolm Xs).

Grown African folks who seek to **educate** or help to educate our youth must understand this. Being learned(hopefully) of our past history and aware of our present situation, they/we must understand that it is crucial, for our youth and for the rest of us, that our youth be **educated** to find self-esteem through their own **African** eyes.

In concrete terms, such youth(male and female) will be appreciative of the beauty given to them by their African heritage; will know the beauty of the naps of their hair, for example, and understand that "fried, dyed, and laid to the side" is a symptom of psychological deficiency. They will not be enthralled by European or Euro-American fashions and oblivious to dress of African design and/or inspiration. They will not be experts on the French Renaissance or the Golden Age of Greece and know not a damned thing about the dynasties of Ta-Merry(ancient "Egypt") or the Golden Ages of Songhay, Mali, and Ghana. They will put the collective needs and aspirations of African people before personal ambitions.

If an African youth gets to be grown and successful(by European/Caucasian standards) and serves European/Caucasian interests more or rather than those of his people, is he or she any better or worse than those among us whom some are so quick to refer to as the "criminal element"?

-Editor

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